

Noctis Susurri:  
Sighs of the Night

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Alfred de Kantzow



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**Noctis Susurri**







ALFRED DE KANTZOW.



Noctis Susurri :

Sighs of the Night

BY

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SHERRATT AND HUGHES

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TO  
MISS MONICA HEYWOOD

922020



A minstrel was old and reclining  
Asleep, on the marge of a stream,  
A Genius approached him, entwining  
A wreath round his brow, it would seem.  
Said the Genius : "Thy muse I will cherish,  
Her mesh-spider's web shall not perish."  
A dream !

But yet not a dream, it was real,—  
The figure that dropped by his side,  
A palpable form, not ideal,  
Thus fulfilment and dream were allied.  
Said the Genius : "Thy muse I will favour,"  
Then the Poet, desisting to waver,  
Replied :

"My songs were begotten in sorrow,  
My harp-strings were touched by the wind;  
But ever I hoped in some morrow  
To gather together and bind  
In a Volume, my Verse and my Theme,  
To the Truth, I awake from a dream,  
It is signed !"



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# Noctis Susurri



## Noctis Susurri: Sighs of the Night.

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### THE INDIAN PRINCE.

SAID the Prince: "I am bent,  
And resolved," said the Prince,  
"To adopt the pure Faith of the Christian.  
Vishnu, Siva, and Brahma,  
The Gods of my Fathers,  
I relinquish—for other religion."

"Prince of Ind," said the Pope,  
In his vestments and cope;  
"Let me guide thee the way to St. Peter,  
And within the vast dome,  
Be converted to Rome,  
And be canonised sooner or later."

"But the Protestant Faith  
Are the branches that spread  
From the trunk of the tree that is ours.  
Their Cathedrals and Fanes  
Are the rifled remains  
Of Basilica, Chantreys and Abbeys."

Now John Calvin forbad,  
And the poor Prince was sad ;  
For the Calvinist creed much alarmed him,  
When an Abbess of old  
Rising out of the mould  
Embraced the Oriental and charmed him.

The High Church did look down  
On the Low with a frown,  
Tho' of *one* Creed they could not agree.  
The dark Prince was confused,  
Nay profane—was amused,  
“ I remain still the Pagan,” said he.

Th' Presbyterian arose,  
With admonitions and woes ;  
Yet with manners extremely beguiling.  
And expounding from text,  
Alien sense he annexed,  
Which proved a one-sided compiling.

Lo ! the Lutheran Church  
Played processional march,  
Or else it was Anthem ecstatic.  
Which the Prince so enthralled,  
That the band he recalled,  
Which the Pastor refused as erratic.



In Moravian Psalm  
There was hope, there was balm,  
The Baptist was dipped in immersion.  
The Greek Church stood aside,  
To no other allied,  
Chrysostom its single confession.

John Wesley's pale shade  
Did appeal to the Prince  
To accept the great Faith of Redemption.  
The Hindoo, moved to tears,  
And abandoning fears,  
Fell back on the Rock of Salvation.

In meeting-house form,  
And in grey-shadowed garb,  
The Quaker advanced—William Penn—  
And he silently prayed  
For the Prince, and he said :  
“ Be peaceful and true among men.”

Swedenborg in the North,  
Apparition issued forth,  
Gazing upward upon the Seventh Heaven.  
He could not comprehend  
The Triumvirate God,  
Yet through the Mediator sin was forgiven.

In dust and in ashes,  
Spake Job—in gloom flashes,  
The reproof of his friends—the dejected.  
Then Isaiah drew near,  
And that Tishbite the seer,  
This trio the Prince much affected.

Gentle hand led the Prince,  
An invisible hand,  
To the Church Apostolic of Irving.  
Where, like bolt from the blue,  
An Archangel down flew,  
And numberless Angels were falling.

The Theist held firm,  
That a Triplicate form,  
To the Cause of all causes was error.  
And Jehovah sublime,  
First and last in all time,  
Indivisible was—and is ever.

But the Positivist  
To the Prince did insist  
On reality only, not fancy;  
Cause of Comte he upheld,  
Who chimeras dispelled  
As will-o'-the-wisp necromancy.

The Agnostic was seen  
In Hall, he was keen ;  
Hume, Hegel he quoted, and Spencer.  
Th' Asiatic was won  
By his logic, and said :  
“ Henceforth let no man be a censor.”

“ Let *me* have a voice,”  
Said the man of the age,  
“ Let Science her searchlight throw forward,  
And flood over with light  
The wide surface of night,  
On this Planet—its keynote is Onward.”

But the Moralist urged  
That mankind should be purged  
Of their craft and their evil behaviour.  
Said he : “ Science is cold,  
And the sects manifold,  
Still I bow to their Head in their Saviour.

“ Puissant Prince,” said the Pope,  
“ With the sects canst thou cope?  
And which of the whole doth allure thee?  
St. Peter the keys  
Of Paradise gave  
To the Popes that preceded me purely.”

Then the Prince made reply :  
“ Holy Pontiff not I  
Can join in the scheme of allegiance.  
Nor in thine, nor in one  
Of the sects—I am won  
By Morality, Theism, Science.”

The Evangelist here  
Exclaimed : “ Prince, have a care  
Of churches unsound, adventitious.  
Since the Council of Worms,  
These have introduced forms,  
Capricious, extreme, surreptitious.”

Said the Prince : “ I have come  
From the Clime of the Palm,  
Thro’ lengthened and arduous travel.  
To be caught in a maze  
Of multitudinous ways,  
A maze I have failed to unravel.”

Then straightway he rallied,  
The phalanx he parried,  
Of Heterodox, Orthodox, Jew.  
To his first love of Rama,  
To Vishnu, the Preserver,  
He returned, as a faithful Hindoo.

So retracing his steps,  
He besought all his gods  
To forgive him that e'er he had wandered  
To the "Houses of Rimmon"  
In the West—he was shriven,  
But still, as philosopher, pondered.

As the mist wraps the brow  
On the summit of Alps,  
Shades cover Religion in grandeur.  
Still shadows will pass,  
And we see through a glass  
Darkly, as clouded as amber.

No. 32, DUNCAN TERRACE, ISLINGTON.

COULD these walls speak, what histories  
could they tell!

Of former splendour in a far-gone while;  
Time, in its belfrey, struck the mournful  
knell,

And desolation wrapt this stately pile.

A tangled creeper o'er the garden spreads,  
Recumbent statue there presides no more;  
Neglected are the once trimmed flower beds,  
The latch unlifted of the outer door.

Within this lofty crimson banquet hall,  
Were held high revel by assembled guests;  
Imagination only may recall  
The festive company—no sign attests.

Up the stone flight of stairs a hollow sound  
Reverberates—our very steps intrude;  
We seem to penetrate enchanted ground,  
Where shadows flit in silent solitude.

## SIGHS OF THE NIGHT 9

In this old Georgian drawing-room music  
    pealed,

    “Fair women and brave men” have  
        communed here;

Their destinies for ever unrevealed,  
    Their lineage graven on oblivious bier.

Scale we the dormitories remote, on high,  
    Dreams and their dreamers have subsided  
        both;

This parapet remains an effigy,  
    These voids of slumber hold not e'en the  
        moth.

The times have changed these famous sites  
    among,

    Their ancient usage fallen into rust;  
The Northern coach no longer speeds along,  
    Man and his objects crumble into dust.

The “Merry bells of Islington” still ring,  
    And Islington, its green, is sylvan yet;  
Unflown, “the Angel” still displays its wings,  
    But this deserted mansion claims regret.

THE MOON.

Break, break thy silence; speak, I  
importune!

Break, break thy silence; speak, I  
importune!



## CHRISTMAS, 1900.

THE gaze is lured to yonder stars of night  
Trembling with pity o'er the Afric  
plain;  
The heart so dauntless and the form so bright  
Met at life's very vestibule and slain.

Mourn for the dead—the brother and the son—  
Dull alien earth on each insensate breast;  
The silken coils of being all undone—  
At banquets there will sit the shadowy  
guest.

The crimson berries pale beside the rue;  
Ashes for evergreen bestrew the floor;  
The season comes, indeed, to me and you,  
But not to those, the loved, that are no  
more.

## THE LILAC AND THE LABURNUM.

THE lilac lone points to the skies,  
And lifts the soul above;  
But not for me is Paradise  
Restoring all I love.

As the laburnum's tassels droop,  
And to the earth depend,  
My soul, devoid of faith, doth droop,  
And fears death is the end.

I wish I held the lilac fast—  
Whose day like mine is brief;  
But the laburnum at the last  
Holds me without relief.

“TIME IS A NOISELESS FILE.”

*(From the Italian.)*

LOVE in the early garb of loveliness  
 Catches the ardour of life's morning ray,  
 But O! love loses half her happiness;  
 At sunset there is little left to bless;  
 All things are passing, all things pass away.

Ambition doth the soul of man beguile;  
 All that he clings to doth his trust betray;  
 Love is a Talisman, but Time a File;  
 The Holy City falls, a ruined pile;  
 All things are passing, all things pass away.

In Eastern climes, in India's blazing noon,  
 I lapsed to breathless languors day by day,  
 And many times the waxing, waning Moon  
 Filled, in the sky, and fell into a swoon;  
 Suns that have set, Moons that have passed  
 away.

“WHAT DOEST THOU HERE, ELIJAH?”

THE roll of thunder wakes these slumbering  
downs,  
Reverberates hoarsely in the sombre sky;  
Jehovah's voice moves in these quaking tones,  
And doth the prostrate Tishbite terrify.

“What doest thou here, Elijah? Prophet  
speak!”

“O Thou Eternal One, to worship Thee;  
Bound to the earth, I lift mine eyes and seek  
Some revelation of man's destiny.

“Lo! Thou descendest in this lurid mist,  
Deign to declare the ultimate of man;  
If, after death, he join the Angelic host,  
Or perishes when ends this mortal span.”

“What doest thou here, Elijah? Prophet  
speak!”

“God of my fathers, here I thee implore  
On this Mount Horeb, Lord, the truth I seek,  
If man shall pass beyond death's sullen door.”

“GOD BURIES HIS WORKMAN BUT  
CARRIES ON HIS WORK.”

MOST dire decree—resistless as the tide  
That rises and is reflux—foams and  
fades—

The law abideth but the waves subside—  
Man passes to impenetrable shades.

The links are broken but preserved the chain ;  
Age after age sweeps on the human race ;  
Kings vanish, but their dynasties remain,  
Rome falls—The world is moved not from  
her place.

This earthly pilgrimage leads to the grave—  
O thought that should dismay the stoutest  
mind !

His dearest nor himself man cannot save ;  
His web with warp and woof dark angels  
bind.

## WHISPER OF THE WAVES.

L O! I wandered, and I pondered,  
And, meandering, I wondered,  
By the deep blue sea,  
While the ocean, in commotion,  
Whispered unto me.

“ There are graces in lonely places,  
And embraces in my spaces,  
Far over the main.  
There’s an Eden in that region  
Where the sea gods reign.”

Quick I uttered, hoarsely muttered,  
“ Shall the soiled and shall the shattered  
Ever reach that sea?”  
Then the billows, in their shallows,  
Whispered hope to me.

MAGDALENE.

“D’ou viendrait tant d’orgueil à la poussière,  
et tant de prétensions au néant.”

ANCILLON SUR L’IMMORTALITE DE  
L’AME.

NEVER doth nature shatter  
    Apart from *spirit*—matter  
    With one—the other’s doom—  
And not the soul a-flying  
While hands and feet are lying  
    Corrupting in the tomb.

We live in fear and trembling,  
Dissemblers and dissembling,  
    For Faith none can define—  
Stern Nature is sardonic,  
Despotic and ironic,  
    Fate is her concubine.

Ye temples and ye altars,  
Bewildered reason falters  
    And reeleth at your feet.  
Yet Faith if it deceive us—  
The wrong is not so grievous—  
    Her anodyne is sweet.

Now men of Science lead us—  
And greater will succeed us—  
    Tho' dead we shall not learn.  
As every age upholdeth  
The "Scripture" that it holdeth,  
    Truth rests not in an urn.

Sapient's discovered forces,  
In their stupendous courses,  
    Of Radium—Liquid Air—  
The rays of Light Electral,  
An apparition spectral,  
    A gnome!—a ghost!!—a glare!!!

Still climbing Jacob's ladder—  
We hesitate—are sadder,  
    Tho' gaining rung by rung.  
We reck that Nature's vaster,  
Awe doth the soul o'er-master  
    Tumultuous stars among.

Thus in our strange existence,  
Deep silence in the distance,  
    Nor finger-post, nor mark.  
Impute it not to treason,  
For Faith, if we seek Reason,  
    To guide us thro' the dark.



## SIGHS OF THE NIGHT

19

O ye by Faith uplifted,  
Extenuate th' ungifted  
    Their fault of UN-belief.  
The glow of hope, remember—  
Is your's—while their's the ember,  
    And their mistrust, their grief.

THE SAGE, THE PRIEST, AND THE  
CREED.

“ I WAS born,” said the creed,  
    “ In an age,” said the sage,  
    “ A primitive age unto me.”  
“ I was once,” said the priest,  
“ In the cloisters, a monk;  
    “ And Faith was my province and plea.”

“ I now waive,” said the creed,  
“ And renounce,” said the sage,  
    “ The myths and the legends of old.”  
“ I would cast off their bonds,”  
Said the creed, as it mused,  
    “ To be in new Gospels enrolled.”

“ It has waned,” said the sage,  
“ And declined,” said the creed,  
    “ The dogma that ruled in religion.”  
“ It is gone,” said the sage,  
“ Ever gone,” said the creed,  
    “ From the Temple—THAT Faith of the  
    Christian.”

“It was laid,” said the sage,  
“In repose,” said the creed,  
    “In the chantry close by the High Altar.”  
“And no more,” said the sage,  
“Never more,” said the creed,  
    “Is supreme in the prayer-book or psalter.”

“I am kind,” said the creed,  
“Very kind,” said the sage,  
    “To the poor, and the sick, and the sad.”  
“And I,” said the priest,  
“Do my utmost: at least,  
    “I pray for the impious and bad.”

“O, my comrade, alas!”  
Said the priest to the creed,  
    “Thou art won by the sage from my side,”  
“But I hold to the Faith,  
“Till the throes of my death,  
    “That ONE for Humanity died.”

“The Divine,” said the creed,  
“Palpitateth and breathes  
    “On the land, on the sea, in the air.”  
“But the silence above,  
“My stress doth not remove,”  
Said the sage, “and remains my despair.”

“Lo! the Faith that I hold,”

Said the sage to the priest,

“Expands in the dawn of the light.”

“Persecution no more

“Shall oppress,” said the sage,

“As in the dark ages of night.”

“Oh, list,” said the creed—

“I hear,” said the sage—

“To that which is mortal Salvation.”

“I bend knee,” said the priest.

“It is this,” said the creed:

“It is Love, and the soul’s adoration.”

## THE PANTHEIST.

I SEEK the Deity: I wrestle most;  
I who sit scorned outside the temple gate—  
In vigils of the night I keep my post;  
Others are sure—I only watch and wait.

I supplicate—Who answereth my prayer?  
He doth—in murmuring waves or not at  
all—  
In clouds he is transfigured in the air;  
Through the dense forest echoes his foot-  
fall—

The amazing stars, each is a heavenly sphere;  
The ineffable surrounds each mountain  
height—  
In the vast Universe, or far or near,  
Throbs the great heart of all, by day and  
night.

## “DEATH SCORNS TO TREAT.”

—Dr. BLAIR.

“DEATH scorns to treat,” the sable  
monarch jeers,

Laughs in the faces of his myrmidons;  
What is't to him the anguish and the tears!

He hands his fiat to attendant gnomes.  
As “the Wise Virgins,” let us so prepare  
’Gainst his insidious, leopard-like advance;  
Free from the meshes of a blank despair,  
Nor dazed, astonished! at his withering  
glance.

Not on their guard, the thoughtless e’er defer  
 (“Procrastination is the thief of time”)

To place possessions in a manner clear,

Intestasy is both folly and a crime.

Put we our “house in order” and devise,

As best is deemed, if either rich or poor;

A Paradise creeds promise in the skies,

One thing is certain—Death will ope’ the  
door.

We see the Sun and Moon a little while,

We’ve passionately loved, must still love  
on;

The object reft—no more the look or smile,  
Death plunged the poignard—the loved  
one is gone.

The pomp of Death!—its all inspiring awe,  
“Dead March in Saul” so solemn, yet so  
sweet

Interweave, mingle with mysterious law;  
Parley we not with death, “Death scorns  
to treat!”

## INSTINCT.

THE flame eternal of the vestal light  
Which consecrates the ardour of the  
soul—

The rustle of the wings of swallow flight—  
The turning of the needle to the pole.

Ah ! do not hamper Nature's rhythmic pulse,  
Which beats in cadence to the stars that  
glow,

By superstition which doth sense convulse  
With legends handed down from long ago !

Man, who knows nothing, doth aver too much ;  
And thus extinguished is, by stifling creeds,  
The burning flax whose tongue of fire would  
touch

The distant Paradise our longing needs.



THE SONG THAT SHE NEVER WILL  
SING.

THE song and the words I remember,  
But the strain and the singer took wing :  
She sang in an olden December,  
The song that she never will sing.

She was fair as a rose in the bower ;  
To her voice and her beauty I cling ;  
It is all that is left of that hour,  
The song that she never will sing.

She hath gone from my gaze, and hath  
perished,  
Her self and her song are nothing ;  
An echo alone I have cherished—  
The song that she never will sing.

## THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY.

“If thou believest not as he believeth, 'tis a plain proof that he believeth not as thou believest—and no earthly power can judge between ye.” —COBBETT.

CAST the eye back on History's cryptic page;

Learn of a thousand temples, thousand creeds,

What boots it if by savage or by sage

The self-same adoration kneels and pleads?

Through a glass darkly seeth all mankind;

Who can pass judgment on his human peer?

Each may devote the tribute of his mind,

If privilege must vanish—vanish Fear.

From various rays the film of light is caught;

As doth the rainbow spread her glowing arc,

By circle half is spanned the dome of thought,

And half is hidden 'neath the earth and dark.

## THE CRYPT OF ST. PAUL'S.

THE pilgrim pauses in this twilight crypt  
By Nelson's tomb—in contemplation  
deep—

Here all the pageantry from life is stript,  
Unconsciousness supplanteth even sleep.  
Here faithful Collingwood rests by his side,  
His "own familiar"—as in life, in death—  
Here desolation doth extinguish pride,  
For what are ashes, to the vital breath?  
Still fascination doth pervade this place,  
Which battle, havoc, tumult, cannot share;  
And round about there droops quiescent  
grace,

Great Nelson's halo glimmers in the air.  
Still wandering on, in this sepulchral cave,  
The pilgrim wearies—would no longer  
roam;  
What lustre once! What darkness of the  
grave!  
Hence—back to daylight of the mighty  
dome!

BESIDE Great Jove  
Two cups have ever stood :  
The one with evil filled,  
The one with good.  
To most He deals out both—  
The cup unmixed  
Is curst indeed.”

—HESIOD.

Ironical, irrational, is this,  
With happiness that sorrow should be  
mixed;  
And unalloyed with baser metal—bliss  
Be undesired—strange decree affixed.

My reasoning is faint—some stronger brain  
Should this elucidate, for mine's at fault.  
Avaunt, ye Ills! I've suffered dire pain  
Mingled with good 'neath this cerulian  
vault.

To my undoing—Hesiod, still thou'rt right,  
And thine old Heathen God full sure was  
just.  
For good and evil, morning and the night—  
Are scales which even weigh our mortal  
dust.

## ELIJAH THE TISHBITE.

“It is enough. Now, O Lord, take away my life;  
for I am not better than my fathers.”

**I**T is enough. The cup of life I've drained  
Unto its lees. 'Tis hemlock at the last.  
My sandals worn, my garments travel-stained,  
Stretch the grey mile-stones in a vista  
passed.

It is enough. Now take away my life.  
My soul is noble by an accident.  
With powers that quell me I am e'er at strife;  
Like sea-weed tossed, I drift—so Nature  
meant.

Enough—I am not better than my sires;  
Myself a mental cave-man wandering—  
As I advance the Lord of Hosts retires;  
Eludes the arms that would about Him  
cling.

## SAKYA-MOUNI.

BEHOLD! the saint exclaimed; the  
Heavens fall down,  
Or Earth is lift unto them; stars so bright,  
So full, shine in the void—a sense, unknown  
As yet, upon my spirit doth alight.

Death flies the world on yonder fleecy cloud;  
Banished are sin and suffering henceforth;  
The unusual sky so luminously bowed  
Some revolution augurs on this earth.

Said I (he needed not), to-morrow morn  
Unruffled still will break, O Anchorite!  
His hair was matted and his face was worn;  
I left him to his thoughts and fields of  
light.

## SIR HENRY IRVING.

“ I KNEW him, Horatio,” and his potent  
spell.

Hamlet is dumb, King Richard raves no  
more ;

“ The Bells ” hung listless, and the curtain  
fell,

As death cast Shakespeare’s dramas on the  
floor.

Strange his last utterance on the mimic stage,

“ Into Thy hands, O Lord, into Thy  
hands ! ”

A premonition, mayhap, did presage

His own absorption in his sinking sands.

Fled to the shades of Garrick, Edmund Kean,

And where Macready’s figure largely looms ;

His fervour turned to ashes—and the scene

Changed to the Abbey of monuments and  
tombs.

## THE CREEPER.

A SPORE, transparent, green, which in the  
sun

The bark embraces of a peepul-tree.

Ah! have a care! Thy lowest branch is won!

Canst thou not shake this parasite from  
thee?

It drops its gauzy tendrils on the Earth:

It leaps, it laughs, it gains the topmost  
bough—

The tree is troubled round about its girth,

But all unconscious—Wherefore should it  
know?

The sapless trunk hath slowly crumbled  
down;

The withered weed lies tangled in a heap;

Its own dependence hath it overthrown—

It lies at rest. It cannot even creep.



“CONSCIENCE DOTH MAKE COWARDS  
OF US ALL.”

HAMLET.

LIKE as the riddle of the Theban sphynx,  
The monitor within us doth enthrall;  
Conscience sits crouching as a watchful lynx:  
Thus “Conscience doth make cowards of us  
all.”

In contemplation of the starry skies,  
The galaxies of light our gaze enthrall;  
In conscience yet another wonder lies:  
Thus “Conscience doth make cowards of us  
all.”

Illimitable Space and Time pass on  
Through vacuum—arrested by no wall;  
Conscience continues, never goal is won.  
Thus “Conscience doth make cowards of us  
all.”

A faculty divine, cast in a mould  
Of lead—past memories to retain, recall,—  
Even in dreams th’ accusing tale is told:  
Thus “Conscience doth make cowards of us  
all.”

## ÆTERNUM SALVE!

LIMITLESS space, infinity of time—  
Æternum salve! take me to thy heart,  
Consigned to silence 'mid the stars sublime;  
Absorbed, immutable, how strange thou  
art!

Something, yet nothing; everything art  
thou—

In thy long arms is Deity concealed—  
To the unutterable the head must bow—  
Man stands appalled before the unrevealed.

Caught in the rapids, can I stem their thrall?  
Helpless I'm hurried to their vortex brink—  
I lift my hands above the waters' fall,  
And cry "Æternum salve!" ere I sink.





MELANCHOLIA.

THE ground is ghostly with the dews that  
fall;

Far in the sky there reigns unearthly light;  
Fugitive spirit-clouds the sense appal;

Give me back youth, O melancholy Night!

Ambition climbs in life's effulgent hours,

Climbs oft to vain and visionary height;

No more I enter fancy's fairy bowers;

Give me back Hope, O melancholy Night!

Hers was the grace of Helen, Ninon's bloom;

She was a saint, she was my heart's delight.

Passion eclipsed casts all the soul in gloom;

Give me back Love, O melancholy Night!

## SLEEP.

SLEEP, O Sleep, thou art  
My belov'd sweetheart!  
Soothing all my woes,  
Dreams and their vagaries  
Hover like to fairies  
Over my repose.

From yon elfin region  
Come in frolic legion,  
To my darkened eyes.  
What avails the daylight  
When the morning grey-light  
Must awaken sighs?

Sleep—profound quiescence—  
Distilleth an essence  
To my pensive mood.  
Sleep bestows a blessing,  
Lulling and caressing  
My sad solitude.

One remembered vision,  
From the fields elysian  
At times lingers yet!  
Whilst my past existence,  
Misty in the distance,  
Partly I forget.

Sleep enfoldeth all  
In lethargic thrall,  
Each living thing is blessed.  
Humanity is made  
Alike in every grade,  
In soporific rest.

“A WINDING-SHEET BEARS NO  
POCKET.”

IN vain the sapient or the cynic saith,  
“A winding-sheet not any pocket bears.”  
Immersed in life man disregardeth Death  
And is not daunted by imagined fears.

The house you live in is a house of cards;  
Nothing endures and everything must  
pass;  
To other hands Fate all you have awards;  
The gold we cannot keep, should we  
amass?

The sword of Damocles hangs over all,  
Held by a single hair—let it dismay!  
Inevitably, certainly, 'twill fall.  
Lo! sleep rehearses death—the final play.



## ROMANCERO.

WHERE shall I, who wander weary,  
Find that rest for which I pine?  
Under palms, 'mid deserts dreary,  
Under lindens by the Rhine?

In some wilderness will strangers  
Dig my grave with callous hand?  
Shall I rest at last from dangers  
By a sea, beneath the sand?  
—HEINE.

---

Friend Heine! likewise I wonder  
Wheresoe'er I may be laid;  
When Time's decay hath work'd asunder  
My body and my shade.

The same my desolation,  
What matters where I lie?  
If not re-animation,  
After when I die?

For to my hapless thinking,  
Bereft of mental sight,  
I do not trace the linking  
Of sunset and the light.

## THE IRON STRING.

"Trust thyself. Every heart vibrates to its iron string."

—EMERSON.

I RRÉSOLUTE, most vacillating man!

A very derelict, a ship at sea!

Rudderless, aimless bark, devoid of plan,

Whose idle sails hang limp and listlessly.

Stemming the waves we must not be supine;

The perils of life's voyage threat its course.

The white squall rises—mark the warning  
sign!

Take in the sails—diminish the wind's  
force.

Quiescence, turbulence, 'tis the same thing;

To each we must due vigilance award.

"Let the heart vibrate to its iron string,"

True to itself and ever on its guard.

## SUNSET.

I SAW a shining figure fair and round;  
It stood upon a height with tear-girt eye.  
Hushed in a dread solemnity profound,  
The world was witness as it stooped to  
die.

The foe was near at hand; for underneath  
He strode immense and drew a shadowy  
train;  
Climbed he the hills charged with the chills  
of death;  
'Twas his to vanquish and 'twas his to  
reign.

O! for the spent meridian to absorb  
Each creeping mist! but youth and  
strength were gone;  
Its robes of purple, so, the sinking orb  
Gathered around it and no more it shone.

THE DIAMOND, THE DEWDROP,  
THE TEAR.

DEEP in Golconda's mine a diamond lies,  
    Encrusted by the earth, opaque, obscure;  
The handicraft of art transforms its dies  
    A mineral revelation, flashing pure.

The dewdrop falls from breaking, dawning,  
    skies,  
    Celestial water on the thirsty meads,  
In glistening sparkle blades of verdure rise,  
    The dewdrops graces e'en the tares and  
    weeds.

The tear of love, affliction or regret,  
    Shed at life's altar, is a sacrifice  
To the great Law that everywhere is set  
    In the vast universe of starry skies.

THE DEVIL SPEAKS OF HIS CREATION  
BY MAN.

I F man from Matter anything doth form  
'Tis what like Frankenstein he cannot  
quell;  
As easily control the hurtling storm  
Or curb the billows in their ebb and swell.

Thus was conceived a phantom of his brain  
Inscribed the Evil One—I am that gnome—  
A thing misshapen, wrought of sin and pain,  
Born on the earth and doomed on earth to  
roam.

What Nature made, she made of kindly  
grace—  
The thinking Sage, fair Woman, æther  
blue—  
She gave to each their own adapted face,  
But man made *me* both monstrous and  
untrue!

“GOLD IS WORSHIPPED WITHOUT A  
TEMPLE, AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY.”

—JUVENAL.

THE Queen of Sheba in amazement heard  
King Solomon was rich beyond compare.  
In pomp she met him, and her heart was  
stirred,

His splendour dazzled in its golden glare.  
“Take no thought for the morrow,” sagely  
said

*One* in the ancient land of Palestine.  
“Nor raiment heed ye,” but regard instead  
Life, and the Lily-of-the-Valley’s shrine.  
The unjust steward bore a parable—

We must account for all our several gifts,  
Each for his Talents—man is fallible,

But this Oriental symbol thought uplifts.  
Egyptian, Babylonian, deities!

“Hide your diminished heads.” There’s  
one god more

To whom the race of man doth bend its knee  
In adoration—it is livid *Ore*.

Torpid within the bowels of the earth,  
And soil-encrusted, dull in outer hue;  
Like to Minerva, to whom Jove gave birth,  
Full-panoplied, it issues god-like, too,

Its yellow soul expands, and mortals fall  
Before it prostrate—every head is bowed,  
Like to the Witch of Endor before Saul,  
It conjures—with enchantment is endowed.  
A god of good and evil yet is Gold,  
For to Avernus cumbrous wealth may  
glide.  
If Vice should lead to riot uncontrolled,  
And ope the gates of Pandemonium wide.  
But ah! its mission is to help and save—  
To pour the “Balm of Gilead” on the  
wound;  
To smooth some rugged pathway to the grave,  
And spread the seed upon some arid ground.  
Among its worshippers no hypocrite  
Lifts supplication that is insincere.  
The Globe itself is its Cathedral site,  
Its spire points upward in each clime and  
sphere.  
When Moses came down Sinai’s mount of old,  
The golden calf—a spurious god—he saw;  
He spurned the idol—image made of Gold—  
And broke the tables of the Sacred Law.  
*This* idol be not thine: if Gold be thine,  
That God is, of a truth, a god divine,  
Waving the wand of Mercy and of Love.

## INSOMNIA.

DESCENDING dew, thou spirit of the  
night,

Sweet sleep, where art thou, who desertest me?

No good can reach me by the morning light.

Let the world hail the dawn, its radiance  
bright;

I only ask for thee.

Come on thy pinions to this withered frame

And murmur in mine ear thy lullaby—

Darkness I seek, recoiling from the flame;

Slumber, I woo thee, for I have no claim;

Petitioner am I.

Sleep, I would bribe thee—take this fervid  
thought.

“O thou art fairer than a thousand stars;

Thou hast the key of night and thou are  
fraught

With the pale moon’s effulgence.” Thus  
besought

Enchain me in thy bars.

Put me to sleep. I’ll dream I’m in a wood,

Funereal trees of cypress rustling nigh,

Faint, gurgling, far, Lethean, languid flood,

While overhead a soundless peace doth brood,

Save for some night-bird’s cry.



## IN THE GLEN.

WITHIN the glen I wander,  
The forest trees are bare,  
And uselessly I ponder,  
With thoughts that beat the air.

The weeping ash and willow,  
That rustle by the mere;  
The boom of distant billow  
Are all the sounds I hear.

Repose and I are strangers,  
I cannot lie at rest;  
I fear impending dangers,  
Alarm pervades my breast.

I am alone with Nature,  
Disdains she to confide;  
Man is her finite creature,  
Her empire is too wide.

So torpidly the sunlight  
Surrounds this nether gloom,  
There is not even one light  
My faith to re-illumine.

The records—I misdoubt me—  
Of ages long ago,  
Religion soothes—without me,  
Its solace I forego.

THE ANCIENT GREEK'S PRAYER TO  
HIS DIVINITY.

CLOUD-RULER veiled in air,  
Dost hover everywhere,  
In the star-souls art there,  
So breathe we thee this prayer.

To sight lost—not to heart—  
We pine from thee apart—  
A distant archer art,  
Pointing the solar dart.

In death when we shall sink,  
O, lead us o'er the brink—  
That we on thee may think  
Though spirit, chain and link.

“CALAMITATE MOTALIUM ANIMI

MOLLES SUNT.”

—TACITUS.

WHEN pain and anguish wring the brow,  
To every blast the head doth bow  
The cup with sorrow filled.  
With tribulation overwrought,  
How chastened is each languid thought,  
Its native ardour chilled.  
Fair fortune scattered at a breath,  
Or some loved object reft by death,  
Should pass for evermore.  
Then blank dismay, too deep for tears,  
May drift along the tide of years,  
Weed fringed upon life's shore.  
Calamity then softens all  
When bitter wormwood, rue and gall  
Poison the vital springs.  
Man, helpless as a child at first,  
Powerless to grapple all his worst,  
To solace vainly clings.  
But time that marreth mosses too,  
From heaven lets fall a healing dew  
When darkest night is past.  
And from her dregs doth grief distil  
An essence pure and sweet—that will  
Be with us to the last.

## THE ESCURIAL.

'N EATH the high altar of the chapel there  
    Repose the ashes of the Spanish kings;  
And though Cimmerian darkness fills the air  
    Through which the guiding torch its yellow  
        flings,  
A nameless pathos lingers in this lair,  
    Where sunk in sleep the passions fold their  
        wings;  
An airy grace, a charm impalpable  
    Pervades these regal courts forlorn and  
        chill,  
Most unadorned is this most high domain,  
    A palace and a sepulchre as well—  
Nay more, a Convent sacred unto Spain,  
    Harmonious whole that weaves a triple  
        spell—  
O should a voice arouse each dormant reign  
    And Spain's impending ruin should fore-  
        tell!  
But no—let Death preserve his only boon  
    Nor violate his own Lethean swoon.

## THE HUM OF THE BAR.

MELODIOUS the voices commingle,  
Confused as a torrent afar;  
He sits in the fireside ingle,  
And is lulled by the Hum of the Bar.

He yields to temptation of Satan,  
And rises from earth to a star;  
He bids all the Puritans hate on,  
And is lulled by the Hum of the Bar.

Queen Alcohol comes and caresses,  
She drives him about in her car;  
She charms and she kisses and blesses,  
He is lulled by the Hum of the Bar.

His heart, that was riven with sorrow,  
Submits, and is healed to a scar;  
He cares not at all for to-morrow,  
He is lulled by the Hum of the Bar.

## TO A CHILD.

THY look goes through and through me,  
Thy manner hath beguiled,  
Can such a thing undo me,  
Little child?

Thy years are all before thee—  
As yet thou'rt undefiled—  
May angel wings be o'er thee,  
Little child!

Thy prattle's filled with laughter,  
O creature fair and wild;  
Thou'rt gone, but I strain after,  
Little child.

## AMONG THE TOMBS.

ENTER not here, “ye hapless sons of  
clay,”

Or else confront regret’s pervading  
gloom;

Ever the shadows overcast the day,

Where reigns the silent Empire of the  
Tomb.

But if some loadstone draws thee to its side,

Remember the inevitable doom

To all is meted—none can long abide—

Out of the silent Empire of the Tomb.

Here sculptured marble oft essays to cheat

Corruptions deadly work and words assume,

In countless phrase, presumption to repeat

Within the silent Empire of the Tomb.

Yet unto such whom hope and faith allure,

Let recollection fond their torch illumine;

Others may pause and pensively endure—

Yield to the silent Empire of the Tomb.

Unnumbered relics rest impassive here,

Unconscious all, each in its narrow room;

Methinks I see King Death himself appear

Amid the silent Empire of the Tomb.

## WHEN I SHALL DIE.

I N sleep I fold my limbs and languor creeps  
On my spent frame. I slumber from a  
sigh;

In sleep I wander unto shoreless deeps.  
So would I die.

No wistful faces gathered round my bed;  
Nor friend nor bending child to bid good-  
bye;  
For flickering sense—unconsciousness instead.  
So would I die.

As rivers run to the eternal sea,  
The stream of life ebbs thither at the last;  
The booming of the ocean sounds to me  
Faintly and vast.



## THE NORTH-EAST WIND.

IT is gathering fast  
With its withering blast,  
The mist-laden icicle wind,  
It rides the pale horse  
In its phantom-like course,  
The raving and ravening wind.

It is blown from the east  
On man and on beast,  
The easterly, northerly wind,  
Like the white bear it leaps,  
Over icebergs it sweeps,  
In a hurricane havoc—the wind!

“O! tell me,” I said,  
To the wind as it sped,  
“I implore thee, O! tell me, thou wind,  
Shall I see her again?”  
But I pleaded in vain;  
It passed me unheeding—the wind.

Fraught with anguish and pain,  
In its sobbing refrain  
It lamenteth—the sorrowful wind.  
And there is in its moan  
Some secret unknown  
Of grief in the heart of the wind.

## EGYPT UNVISITED.

SHALL I yet see thine awe-inspiring land,  
Walk 'midst thy ruin of primeval days,  
Meet the hot welcome of thy glowing sand,  
Muse as I wander—wonder as I gaze?

Shall I explore thy once majestic fanes,  
Pass through the pyramids' Cimmerian  
glooms,  
Trace on thy sculptured walls departed reigns,  
Pause 'mid thy temples—ponder o'er thy  
tombs?

Methinks in contemplation lost awhile  
E'en now on Thebes' regal site I tread,  
And near the banks of Lotus-wreathéd Nile  
Talk with crowned ghosts, question the  
priestly dead.

## THE BELLS OF ST. LEONARD.

C HILL stillness pervadeth the air,  
Its calmness partakes of despair,  
And leaden the landscape and sky.  
I'll not drink to the New Year—not I!  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

If I called her to me would she come?  
She lieth unconscious and dumb,  
Around her damp dewes from the sky.  
She is dead. Alas! why did she die?  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

She was like a white rose on the wall,  
Whose petals are destined to fall.  
She is far as a star in the sky—  
Worse ill from the gods I defy,—  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

At approach of New Years that are gone,  
The bells of St. Leonard rang on—  
On mine ears thro' the sombre grey sky,—  
But now they are only a cry,  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

St. Leonard's was ruin of old,  
More ruin 'tis now manifold,  
For she lies there inert 'neath the sky.  
The bells will be rung by-and-bye,  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

Methinks to escape from the sound,—  
But here by a spell I am bound,  
In a circle of earth and of sky,—  
I shudder as midnight draws nigh,  
And when the bells ring I will sigh.

## THE PASSAGE OF THE GANGES.

ROCKS, kindred rocks, that lie around in  
silence,

Brooding through ages, solemn and sublime,  
Let us emerge from lethargy with violence !  
Let us adore the Author of all time !”

So said a rock, or sought the words to utter,  
With human voice its brother rocks to  
reach,  
But soon subsiding, it could only mutter  
Sounds incoherent, rhapsodies of speech.

Responsive Heaven spake with voice of  
thunder,  
“Thou hadst no soul, yet hast attained a  
soul ;  
My lightning falls dividing thee asunder,  
And through thy rocky cleft shall Gunga  
roll.”

## THE PORTALS OF LIFE.

"In youth all doors open outward, in old age all doors open inward."  
—LONGFELLOW.

THE sun mounts proudly in the morning  
sky,  
Sheds lustre on the hills;  
He will descend in rose tints by-and-bye,  
And sink in evening chills.

He lights the ocean on his molten way,  
Inspires the happy hours;  
He is the reigning monarch of a day,  
Fade will his phantom towers.

And so, all doors turn outward unto youth,  
All doors turn in to age;  
Youth claims our homage, Age implores our  
ruth:  
Praise youth, pity the sage!

## A GROVE OF BANYAN TREES.

ONCE on a time did Buddha, wrapt in  
thought,  
Recline beneath a shady banyan-tree ;  
The boughs bent downward and a grove was  
wrought,  
And Buddha lingered there in reverie.

Its fibrous columns formed a sacred fane ;  
The Hindoo made it his resort of prayer ;  
The holy calm so free from earthly bane,  
The lost and love-lorn sought a solace there.

Its broad green leaves conceal the crimson  
bird,  
Still climbs the squirrel round each goodly  
bole ;  
Shrill from the glen the peacock's note is  
heard,  
And through the brambles sparkling waters  
roll.

## THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

I MET a pilgrim wending, worn—  
Where life's last limit lies,  
Resistless, helpless, was he borne,  
Upon the Bridge of Sighs.

He spake so gently to me then,  
As one to soothe—who tries,  
As if he did my sorrow ken,  
Upon the Bridge of Sighs.

Said he, "Take comfort. Ah! my friend,  
"Reflect! O wretch, be wise,  
"There is Oblivion at the end,  
"Upon the Bridge of Sighs."



## THE FIRE-WORSHIPPERS.

ALLAH IL ALLAH! In your wondrous  
sun—

That globe of light—Thou mayest be  
enroll'd,  
The mind disordered by a faith undone,  
In its bright whiteness may its shades  
enfold.

Our mortal vision hath this visible sign  
Of the invisible Force that's everywhere  
In the vast universe—and is divine,  
Holding the trembling Earth on empty air.

The dazzling object climbs the dewy East,  
The breast with its own fervour doth  
inspire;  
Of God in the blue sky 'tis the high priest  
Or is the symbol; so we worship fire.

## THE CLOUD.

IT comes from sources I know not where,  
On pinions that are formed of air;  
I watch the film that fleeteth by,  
The White Cloud in the sky.

From spirit land to spirit sea,  
It bears a message—not for me,  
The very scroll I can descry,  
The White Cloud in the sky.

It moves in haste, it hurries past,  
I love the phantom passing, passed,  
And as it vanishes, I sigh,  
The White Cloud in the sky.

It looks a shade—might be a soul;  
Doth any law its course control?  
It seems to me a mystery,  
The White Cloud in the sky.

So earthly aspects flush and fade,  
Ephemeral life's a vaporous shade,  
As sped the cloud, dispersed on high  
The White Cloud in the sky.

THE TOMB OF HYDER ALI AT  
SERINGAPATAM.

YON setting sun-globe's dim diminished  
fires

Transfuse the cloudy battlements of night;  
This Indian shrine revealeth rival spires  
And flusheth crimson in the waning light.

Black marble pillar-shafts support the dome  
Like sentries cloak'd; on carpet squares  
between

The Mullahs read the Koran by the tomb—  
The tomb of Hyder Ali and his queen.

By the dark cypress flank'd with lofty towers  
A mosque unfoldeth in the glimmering  
glade;

The mighty Tippoo formed within these  
bowers

This mausoleum to his Father's shade.

## THE WAVES.

THEY come in their glamour, the senses  
enamoured,

And burst on the shore;

They spring with elation, and sink in  
prostration,

To rise nevermore.

The billows adoring their God in their  
soaring,

Fall prone on the shore;

Their requiem sounding, their being con-  
founding,

Struck dumb from a roar!

Their brows are dishevelled and flat are they  
levelled,

Are spent on the shore;

They swirl in their seething, and hoarse in  
their breathing,

The waves are no more.

So man like to billows doth sink in the  
shallows

At last on life's shore;

Creeds say from the Ether his waves will  
re-gather;

A dream—'tis no more.

## THE NAUTCHNEE.

HE sleeps; he sees me not; how wan that  
face!

What devastation hath this fever made!  
The traits familiar scarcely can I trace;  
My Jasmin flower is not; I do but see its  
shade.

The English Hakim said he must depart;  
The ship will take him to his native shore;  
I am as naught—only a broken heart—  
But I who loved him fondly ever shall  
deplore.

My race, religion, sums up all in Fate;  
I have been happy and should not  
complain;  
Arrows from ambush reach us soon or late—  
He wakes! sip this elixir—Sahib, speak  
again.

## THE NIGHT AIR.

A WAKING from sleeping,  
Mysteriously creeping,  
Low, leaving its lair;  
Some sorrow implying,  
For sobbing and sighing  
Doth wail the Night Air.

It whispers and mutters,  
And fitfully utters,  
A cry of despair;  
For happiness vanished,  
In days that are banished,  
Frets—fumes, the Night Air.

O'er sands of Sahara—  
By waters of Marah—  
Beneath the star-glare;  
Its black pinions waving,  
And screeching and raving,  
Hoarse shrieks the Night Air.

Intruding, encroaching,  
Accusing, reproaching,  
    It will not forbear;  
We cannot gainsay it,  
Nor can we allay it,  
    That ghoul, the Night Air.

The soul it appalleth—  
Lost love it recalleth  
    That once was so fair!  
It sinks in the morning,  
Subsiding, unwarning,  
    That ghost, the Night Air.

## VALE.

O H ! fondest one whom I shall see no more,  
Death doth not claim thee but the  
    gaping sea ;  
Go to that distant—to that Indian shore ;  
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !

Ah ! child of mine, though frantic I deplore,  
Fate will not turn aside his set decree,  
Nor Time thy girlhood to my care restore ;  
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !

Once on a time, a baby on the floor,  
In thy first faltering steps I guided thee ;  
A woman now I cannot close the door—  
Vale, vale, in æternum vale !



## BESIDE THE STREAM.

I LAID me down to sleep  
Beside a running stream,  
And in my slumber deep  
I lapsed into a dream.  
The waters murmuring by  
Upon the passing stream,  
Imparted melody  
Unto my daylight dream.  
I dreamed I saw a form,  
An arch that spanned the stream;—  
A rainbow in the storm,—  
Which flushed upon my dream.  
I woke, and all was gone,  
The tempest, and the bow;  
The ripples babbled on,  
And I arose to go.  
And oftentimes I muse  
On that once blazing noon,  
Whose red rays did infuse  
An image in my swoon.  
Mine eyes which then were closed,  
Beheld some shape divine;  
But now mine eyes unclosed  
Behold no gracious sign!

## SEPTIMUS TO LAURA.

EVERYWHERE I seek my Laura,  
For estranged from her I pine,  
Dream of night, the morn's Aurora,  
Prythee, maiden fair, be mine.

Let us wander by the starlight  
Where the honeysuckles twine,  
'Neath the starry mystic far-light;  
Prythee, maiden fair, be mine;

Frown thou not upon my passion,  
For my life is bound in thine,  
Though thy love wear other fashion  
And demureth to be mine.

## LAURA TO SEPTIMUS.

A WOMAN'S heart is tender;  
To transient love she's sold.  
"Before I all surrender,  
Say you'll love me when I'm old.

"Oh, take away your kisses,  
My form do not enfold  
Until your promise this is—  
You will love me when I'm old.

"When the morn hath shed its flushes,  
When the noon hath spent its gold,  
When I've lost my bloom and blushes,  
Will you love me when I'm old?"

“THE MOON THAT CLEFT THE  
CLOUD.”

THO' seas divide us far apart,  
Still thoughts upon us crowd :  
We never shall forget, sweetheart,  
The moon that cleft the cloud.

I miss thy face—thou art not near ;  
My life is disendowed.  
I never shall forget, my dear,  
The moon that cleft the cloud.

There is the shore : along that coast  
Full many tides have flowed  
Since thou and I, O loved and lost,  
Beheld that moon and cloud.

## THE MOON.

**M**YSTERIOUS Moon! what dost thou  
think of Earth,

If thou canst think at all? Hast thou a soul,  
Or art thou nothingness, a dreary dearth?

Can a dead world the dancing tides control?

Source of existence—the red potent orb—

Perhaps the Moon moves as its counter-  
poise;

Desolate Luna, that doth life absorb,

As cold as death, whose influence destroys.

O Moon! O Sun! ye dual agents, say—

What is this world between ye that ye  
share?

Adam and Eve of fearful night and day,

Ah! Why so distant in the speechless air?

## KNOWLEDGE IS DEATH.

“The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of Death.”

—LORD BEACONSFIELD.

WE stand in contemplation on the shore,  
And list, with straining ears, the  
billows roar,

Appalled we feel,—the waters vast before!

Man is a reed—a vapour—and a breath—

“The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
Death.”

From empty void, how did this world emerge?

The hidden secret rolls a hollow surge;—

“The music of the spheres,” a solemn dirge.

Twine we about our brows a cypress  
wreath—

“The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
Death.”

The searching Pioneers, by patient ways,

In Blue Beard rooms of science dare to gaze,

To penetrate the tangled “Cretan maze.”

Their speech is power, and their logic  
saith—

“The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
Death.”

This Upas tree amidst miasma springs,  
 About its roots the creeping scorpion stings,  
 And round its bole the deadly climber clings;  
     A parasite that stifles with its sheath—  
 “The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
     Death.”

Our sum of Knowledge is a little thing;  
 “Our Ignorance immense!” but still we  
     cling  
 To faith—and hope—and fond imagining;  
     Three Houris these—or Witches of  
     Macbeth—  
 “The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
     Death.”

If beyond Nature Deity extends,  
 Omnipotence the ties of Nature rends—  
 Not in our skies that wondrous Figure  
     bends—  
 An empty road upon a barren heath—  
 “The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
     Death.”

The fossils and the stars—their lips are sealed,  
 We cannot peer behind Time's sable shield;  
 The past and future—both are unrevealed:  
     We gaze above us—soon we sink beneath—  
 “The Tree of Knowledge is the Tree of  
     Death.”

## THE LAST WORDS OF RABELAIS

“I go to seek a great perhaps.”

I AM o'erwhelmed—my soul is filled with  
awe.

I must advance, imperiously impelled;  
I am involved in some eternal law,  
By hands invisible I am upheld.

From Something did I come upon this Earth,  
From Something surely I have reason more  
To ask of occult Fate a second birth,  
What'er it be—upon what distant shore.

I feel I am divine and the divine  
I seek with longing—though the world  
should lapse—  
My human body thus do I resign—  
I die. I go to seek a great Perhaps



## DREAMS.

WE dream of a golden to-morrow;  
Peradventure it is as it seems—  
That happiness followeth sorrow  
In the beatific to-morrow  
Pervading our dreams.

In sleep the invisible spirits  
Descend in the darkness of night,  
The soul of the mortal inherits  
A birthright anew from the spirits  
Who shed down their light.

And midnight is more than the morning,  
When something is over our clay,  
Infusing, impelling, adorning,  
The forms that lie dormant till morning—  
Earth-frames of the day.

## ONE PALM TREE TO ANOTHER.

TOGETHER have we seen the early tinge  
Of many a sunrise, soft, diffusing wide—  
Together have we dwelt upon the fringe  
Of the great sea, before its changing tide.

Our leafy voices rustled in the breeze,  
Our branches swayed and touched beneath  
the storm,  
Feuds had we none, we two familiar trees,  
I loved none other than thy graceful form.

Ah! yesternight the lightning darted down;  
Scathed thee—then glistened on the misty  
wave—  
Thy limb is riven—half thy leaves are  
brown—  
I watch thee dying, but I cannot save.

## DESPOILED.

A LONE by the side of the fire  
He sat with his face in his hands;  
Extinguished was every desire

In this wrecked one, cast on the sands.  
Old age had to him been allotted:  
So thin was his person, and knotted  
His hands.

Nor stranger nor guest came intruding;  
He sat in his anguish apart.

On what or on whom was he brooding?  
For something had broken his heart.

The shadows that haunted him ever  
Would creep to him, cling to him—never  
Depart.

For she who had been his existence  
Had gone to “the land of the leal,”  
Through nebulous, mystical distance  
That nothing of faith could reveal;  
And sophistry could not enroll him,  
And religion failed to console him  
Or heal.

THE PARSEE'S FAREWELL TO THE  
SUN.

DISSOLVE as dreams Life's disappearing  
scenes—

It cometh now to pass that I must die;  
Between the clouds the Sun-globe intervenes,  
Sustainer of the Earth, Lord of the Sky.

Visible frame to volumes far, unseen,  
Of incandescent gases, white, intense,  
In thy full panoply of power and sheen  
Didst thou emerge from chaos dark and  
dense.

Oh, lead me unto light, celestial torch,  
Whose sparks as rays descend through  
vacant air;  
Where thou dost distant set seems Heaven's  
porch;  
Beyond this world fain would I follow  
there.

## AT VESPERS.

TREMULOUS twilight supersedes the day,  
 Lit waxen tapers shed a flickering  
 glare;  
 Enthralled—constrained—yet doubtful, I  
 would say,  
 Sancta Maria, save me from despair!

A sunbeam slanteth in with glimmering ray—  
 Lucent it falls 'neath canopy of prayer:  
 Insenate, dubious, I—a thing of clay—  
 Sancta Maria, save me from despair!

The organ swelleth, and the censers sway,  
 Clouding with incense the quiescent air:  
 Sancta Maria—Virgin!—hear me pray:  
 Descend, approach, save—save me from  
 despair!

## THE INDIAN QUEEN.

SLEEP, lull me not; I am afraid of thee;  
    Enfold me not within thy poppied arms  
Lest from my deep insensibility  
    I never wake; this thought my soul alarms."

"Vain is thy fear. How often by thy bed  
    I've watched thee faithfully the whole  
        night long,  
And conjured dreams about thy dusky head!  
    I found thee tired and I make thee strong."

The green cascade fell splashing down the  
    rock;  
    From ledge to ledge the vivid waters leapt.  
The Monsoon muttered. With a sudden shock  
    Whistled the winds—the Maharanee slept.

## THE NIGHTINGALE'S SONG.

THE notes enchanting of the plaintive bird  
Poured from the glen upon the  
listening night;

This monody on Man methought I heard,  
And wonder fell upon mine ear's delight.

“Unhappy Man, the fossils and the rocks  
Show thou art Nothing in the Scale of  
Years;

Sprung from the fish—the lizard and the fox,  
What now divides us?—Genius, love and  
tears.

“But”—Here its song rose tremulously  
sweet—

“In that thou hast thy soul's sublimity,  
Thou'rt more than bird, altho' thy days are  
fleet;

Thou'lt die, but not like beast; thou'lt pass,  
but not like me.”

## THE HIMALAYAS AT GANGOTREE.

SHEER this descent how many thousand  
feet

From this mine eyry! It is legion lost;  
The stifled passion of the torrent's beat,  
A labyrinth of rocks by ravines crossed.

Source of the Jumna—here the sacred stream  
Rises from melting of the snows that fall  
In yonder glen—terrific! Here 'twould seem  
Lies Nature's ruin—Chaos cumbers all.

Brown fern and darker pine, the silver fir  
Is pale among; but whiter is the snow—  
No faintest rustle doth this summit stir;  
The sun shoots arrows from his dazzling  
bow.



## LOVE AND PRAYER.

WHO loveth not is earth upon the  
earth :—

No soul, no heart, no instinct and no  
mind.

Love is the heirloom of our very birth :

Devoid of love we mentally are blind.

By prayer, what bourne is reached? The  
thought is dazed.—

We pray to our own God, we only trust,—  
To the Beyond devotion is upraised,

Praying for gifts, to soar o'er other dust!  
Our prayers are selfish! we should pray for  
light

On the whole world, compassion on our  
race.

Let the soul take the eagle's nobler flight,  
In higher altitudes, in wider space.

## THE SHOOMADOO PAGODA.

HERE stands a vast eight-sided pyramid,  
The Pegu temple, spiral to the sky;  
Oblivion claimed it, so the Fates undid;—  
But former splendours one may still descry.

About the moundings of the figured base,  
Along the circuit of the fissured wall,  
The fleur-de-lys in fancy one may trace,  
And leaves of a Corinthian capital.

Its Images lie prostrate on the ground—  
Dejected sculptures of the gods that were :  
The bells, disused, aloft no longer sound,  
Save when the monsoon shakes them in  
mid-air.

## THE BRAIN.

“The brain, that world of one inhabitant.”

O BRAIN, what art thou, honeycombed  
with cells

Beyond the scope of philosophic ken?  
The skull—a box of tricks—of secret spells;  
The brain—a glowworm shrouded in a glen.

Say, shall the brain remembrance dear resign?  
Memory lies dormant in a crevice dark:  
The train of thought is laid—along the line  
Runs the swift current from a single spark.

A world of one inhabitant, the brain!  
Temple not made with hands, yet made  
devout—  
Ashes in death—Is it returned again?  
“Ask of the worms!” gibbered the goblin  
Doubt.

## THE MIND.

AS one who stands upon a mountain height,  
And takes the circling aspect in his  
eyes;

First, from the mind, evolved is his delight:

Before the mind the varied landscape lies.

If the scene visible is even so,

The things invisible are yet still more:—

Moods, passions, errant fancies come and go

Across the threshold of the mental door.

Our world without is from our world within;

'Tis by imagination we are won—

Like to the spider, so our web we spin;

As weaves the silkworm is the fabric spun.

## THE END OF LIFE.

"At the end of life the journey is among ruins."

—Sir FRANCIS PALGRAVE.

THE hill tops are flushed with the morning;  
The valley is laden with dew;  
But life affordeth no warning  
Nor holds in its maze any clue.

Deep pitfalls in numbers beset us;  
Illusions allure to betray;  
At night the whole world will forget us  
When the curfew has rung on our day.

I move among ruins, am clinging;  
Dejected I falter along—  
"O what was the use of the singing  
If such is the end of the song?"

I move among ruins, am tearful,  
Myself a grey ruin forlorn;  
The spectres around me are fearful—  
What if I had never been born?

## REASON.

“He who will not reason is a bigot, he who cannot is a fool, and he who dares not is a slave.”

—Sir W. DRUMMOND.

PLAIN as the Unicorn hath but one horn,  
And only one, the bigot is avowed.  
His party-faith all other holds to scorn :  
Saved by Election, and by Faith endowed.

Who cannot reason, it is clearly seen,  
Doth measure nothing true by line and  
rule;  
Like Lady Teazle, hid behind the screen,  
He is not guilty, but, he is a fool.

Who dares not,—like the bird before the  
snake  
That cannot fly, he never can be brave.  
Leaders of Science, bid the world awake  
From stupor of the Helot—Sparta's slave !

## THE MESSENGER CLOUD.

DESERTED is the garden where she  
    strayed;

And faded is the rose she gave to me;  
This cell immures me from the lovely maid  
I see in dreams or else may never see.

Ethereal cloudlet softly gliding on,  
Stop for a moment, for the charge is thine  
To bear to her, whom vainly I have won,  
The burden of a passion that is mine.

Tell her that Mirza bound by bolts and bars  
Is held in bondage from her fond caress;  
Say he will seek her yet beyond the stars  
And press the lips that now he cannot press.

## MEDITATIONS.

“God’s judgment does not fall upon the inquirer, or the sceptic.”  
—R. F. HORTON, D.D.

MY Meditations, whoso readeth, may  
At least accord, such were evolved  
from thought.

What if a bard his anguish should betray?  
Of the same blood and fibre all are wrought.

Though mortals differ, and their creeds likewise—

Egyptian, Babylonian, Jains, Hindoos—  
The Christian obelisk points to the skies,  
So did the Medes’, and Canaanite Hebrews’.

God loves the thinker. He who does not  
think,

Can easily believe—with ease condemn,—  
My thoughts with thine, good Reader, prithee  
link—

Let facets glitter; hidden is the gem.



## THE TAJ-MAHAL AT AGRA.

RESPLENDENT twice, the dark Oriental  
Queen,  
Lovely in life, and exquisite in death—  
The moonbeams glitter on this marble screen  
That sculptured thus almost reclaims her  
breath.

Here love reluctant o'er its ashes bowed,  
And brooded in this phantom-haunted  
place,  
Casting a veil of lustre for a shroud  
Over a form of once surpassing grace.

The gurgling waters of the fountains play  
And charm the cypress from its native  
gloom.  
This is not night, this is the dawn of day,  
For shafts of light arise above the tomb.

## VESTIGIA NULLA RETRORSUM.

("There are no steps backward.")

THE sun and moon advance upon the maze  
Of boundless space, attracted to some  
goal;

Never retreating on their beaten ways,  
Thro' the vast void they luminously roll.

If stellar bodies Nature's law fulfil,  
Shall slighter objects her fixed rule defeat?  
Thus mortal man bows to her fiat still:  
Nulla Retrorsum—"There is no retreat."

Not for one hour can we recall the past,  
Still less the bygone years for ever sped.  
Regret, remorse reproach us to the last—  
Walk we then guarded on our daily tread.

The babe doth merge in youth, youth into  
age.

From age—what then?—the rapids cast us  
down.

The brink passed over—creeds the future  
gauge.

But all behind the veil remains unknown.

## THE THREE LANDS.

THE gates of life admit from No Man's  
land;

Heralds proclaim not suffering nor sin;  
Numbers advance as countless as the sand  
Unto this region and are bound therein.

Vistas of charm extend in This Man's land;  
The syren Pleasure sitteth on a rock;  
The bower of Love by summer airs is fanned;  
Soon wintry winds that bower of Love will  
mock.

There are no memories from No Man's land—  
In This Man's land all men would fain  
remain—  
To What Man's land drifts next the faltering  
band  
No tongue can utter—every thought is vain.

## BUDDHA APOSTROPHISES MAN.

BOAST not thyself—consider, child of  
Earth,

The four conditions that on mortals fall,  
The throes which are attendant on his birth,  
The primal tempest—harbinger of all.

Like pack of wolves pursuant on his track  
Diseases harass and bring man to bay—  
Twice thus already is he held in rack  
And danger twice confronts him on his way.

Unlovely age now steals away his youth  
And dulls the transport of his early love,  
Thus even thrice he shrinks, but yet in truth  
One more calamity, he waits to prove.

For, though he hath escaped such varied ills,  
The King of Terrors grips him at the last—  
And careless flings him on Nirvana's chills,  
Distress fourfold hath been about him cast.

## ON A CHILD'S PORTRAIT.

MERELY a picture—for this winsome  
face

Is new to me—arrested thus by art,  
A childish form of such ethereal grace.  
He hath been surely somebody's sweetheart.

The opal hues of dawn suffuse—when lo!  
The rapid mists o'erlap the rising morn,  
And the gay bark that doth on ocean flow,  
The offing near, is to a whirlpool borne.

What wonder then a little child should die  
In his first promise,—but a bud so fair  
“ Implores the passing tribute of a sigh ”—  
'Twill never open to the summer air.

Whose child was this? Who rifled must  
deplore?

Let easy sophists say that death is gain.  
Our brittle idols shattered on the floor  
As fragments leave a picture and a pain.

NIGHT AND THE MOON ON THE  
COROMANDEL COAST.

I N pomp of clouds she walks the dark  
    concave;

Her train is beaded by the evening star;  
The tide leaps to her on the rising wave,  
Responsive to her spiriting afar.

The tented camp is stretched along the plain,  
Wrapt in oblivion; still'd is every sound—  
The jungle near hath its own dense domain,  
Trackless within and interlaced around.

Surf-laden billows, gathering all their might  
On ghostly sands, hoarsely their anthem  
    pour—  
The glamour of this wond'rous Eastern night  
Will never pass—will haunt me evermore.

## YOUTH, MANHOOD, OLD AGE.

“Youth is a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret.”  
—LORD BEACONSFIELD.

CLOUDS gather round the morning sun,  
Obscure its onward way;  
The silken webs by frailty spun  
Infatuate youth betray.

The anxious cares of middle-life  
Oppress the mind of man.  
His daily task—a toilsome strife—  
He lives as best he can.

Like to the sinking sun, old age  
In mists doth mostly set.  
As we review life's pilgrimage,  
How much we must regret!

## THE SEA.

I GAZED upon the illimitable sea,  
And bowed myself before its sovereign  
face;

For it reflects the awful deity  
Endless in Time and Infinite in Space.

I told my anguish to the moaning sea;  
Bent down my fevered forehead on its  
breast;

It laved my brow and whispered unto me  
“Restless thyself, share with me mine  
unrest.”

I made my cry unto the troubled sea;  
It soothed my sorrow with its answering  
breath—

When I am dead who will remember me?  
“I will remember thee after thy death!”

There came a tumult from the moonlit sea  
A sound of many voices and they said—  
“Praise thou the Lord in all His Majesty  
Who moveth on the waters round thee  
spread.”



## VOICES OF THE DOWNS.

THE sheep bells tinkle on the evening air,  
The fleecy flock are gathered to the fold;  
A medley of far sounds is murmuring there,  
And lulls to slumberous rest the darkening  
wold.

But hark! the night wind clamours through  
the vale,  
And tells of sorrow in this earthly plane;  
The heavy heart responsive to its wail,  
Feels that the night wind bears a note of  
pain.

The flush of dawn, the shadows all transfused,  
The skylark chants his matins in a cloud;  
The golden gorse is glistening in the dews,  
But still the singing bird the vapours  
shroud.

Yet one more voice upon the Downs I hear,  
A voice familiar, and in accents low;  
I fall asleep, and she approaches near,  
And in a dream I see the face I know.

## THE DEVIL'S DYKE.

FAR from this mountain ridge behold  
Where tower and turret cluster,  
And all the valley is unrolled  
In many-tinted lustre !

From this aerial height perceive  
The forest, field, and tower ;  
Where, be it morn or starry eve,  
Enchanted still the hour !

Aloof from hence how seem to sleep  
Yon hamlets softly gleaming !  
They are so distant, vague, and deep,  
In stillness they seem dreaming.

The Devil's Dyke hath gossip strange—  
It is an old, old story ;  
It hath a dark and dubious range  
A diabolic glory.

Its varied charms shall none forget—  
Forget its early vision ;  
Memory shall muse and fond regret  
Shall mingle with tradition.

Now some who come and some who go  
Aver the tale a fable,  
That Satan travelled to and fro  
So subtle and so sable !

But, be it false or be it true,  
It is a tale of wonder—  
That here the Devil delved and flew  
And there he vanished under.

So, be it false or be it true,  
It is a tale of wonder—  
That in one night before the dew  
He rent this cleft asunder.

Nay, that which time hath sanctified,  
Let time still hold veracious ;  
And, if the Devil roameth wide,  
Why is this tale mendacious ?

Go, stranger, from this haunted strand,  
Nor from illusion sever ;  
Bear the weird legend with you and  
Declare it true for ever !

## SOME LEAVES.

I N the long, long ago I remember,  
Tho' all is now written in sand,  
A woman, brown-eyed, I remember :  
This stem I preserve as an ember  
Of the leaves she held in her hand.

I wot me it was by a river,  
Where palm trees uprose from the strand,  
By Gunga's tumultuous river—  
I cannot forget her, the giver  
Of the leaves she held in her hand.

In the dust of the ages hath perished  
The scene on that tropical land ;  
Both she and her brown eyes have perished ;  
But skeleton fibres I've cherished  
Of the leaves she held in her hand.

## IN A CEMETERY.

I lift the latch, I pass the wicket gate;  
A cold air meets me as from out a cave;  
Here seemeth the night-lair of death and fate;  
I shudder by each pale and soundless grave.

I read full many a text—convicted stand—  
There's hope—assurance—where the willows  
wave!  
Why, Reason, didst thou so my being brand?  
I fall a convert by my mother's grave.

Strange fascination lures us to the dead,  
To whom we cling and in all ages clave—  
Thus do I ponder by each narrow bed;  
Thus am I spellbound by my mother's  
grave.

## SHADOWS.

“What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue.”

—EDMUND BURKE.

A TRUCE to creeds, for some who grapple  
faith,  
Infirm to comprehend, engrasp a  
wraith :

Whate'er we contemplate, this much is true—  
“Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue.”

By death not only, but in life we've lost  
The vain possessions we had valued most ;  
Desire palleth, all must pass from view :  
“Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue.”

Ambition, Love, endowments are of time ;  
Youth, Beauty, Triumph, are indeed sublime ;  
Sweet roses fade, alas ! these roses, too !  
“Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue.”

Saddest of all, some being, loved and fair,  
A phantom—fleets to shades—we know not  
where ;  
Ourselves must vanish like to drops of dew :  
“Shadows we are, and shadows we pursue.”

## THE SOURCE OF CALAMITY.

SUPREME is Jupiter; 'tis said, therefore,  
 Descending ills are his directed blows—  
 I will not creep outside the room and door  
 Where sits the Judgment how my pains  
 arose.

It may be fate with retributive flail  
 That hath reduced me even to the close;  
 Or else good fortune never did prevail,  
 Or else myself the thorny pathway chose.

But 'tis of *others* I would rather speak,  
 Whose foolish fear their reason doth  
 oppose;  
 If such are chastened, let them elsewhere seek  
 The cause—nor deem that Jove inflicts  
 their woes.

“CEASE TO DO EVIL, LEARN TO DO  
WELL.”

—ISAIAH.

MASTER of pathos was that plaintive seer,  
Who doth affect us still as with a  
spell;  
His spirit, as in Hamlet’s play, draws near,  
And saith, “Cease to do evil, learn to do  
well.”

The invocation is direct and clear;  
With old Hebraic fervour doth excel;  
Isaiah—the prophet-king—doth reappear:  
Implores, “Cease to do evil, learn to do  
well.”

But whence this evil we should shun and fear?  
If there be fiend, why is he loosed from  
Hell?  
’Tis in the heart, not whispered in the ear.  
So mark—“Cease to do evil, learn to do  
well.”



## THE FALLING LEAF.

I T rustled on a bough—a gust of wind  
Detached a hundred leaves. It was  
alarmed  
And shivered to its stem; and then, resigned,  
Stirred not at all—to utter stillness charmed.

The redbreast perched above the leaf and  
cried  
Its requiem, for its moments now were  
brief;  
The mottled owl flapp'd moth-like from its  
side  
Hooting the dirge of that pale withered  
leaf.

The fitful storm came sobbing up the mead,  
Then burst into a hurricane of grief,  
The mist-swathed ash-tree bowed as if a reed,  
In eddying circles whirled the falling leaf.

AND NATHAN SAID UNTO DAVID,  
“THOU ART THE MAN.”

THE wily prophet drew a net around  
The mighty monarch—as a lion caught.  
“Thou art the man!” Affrighted at the  
sound,  
King David paled to ashes over-wrought.

“Thou art the man!” may sink into the heart  
Of many in this present living age.  
Envy’s a passion of envenomed dart;  
Desire engrasps another’s heritage.

“Beware of jealousy,” Iago said;  
Unholy love’s a snake of equal coils.  
The Psalmist and the Hebrew seer are dead,  
But lesson left of sin in Retribution’s toils.

## A SWAMP IN FLORIDA.

DULL desolation broods upon this scene,  
Yet fascination here asserts its sway,  
Date palm-trees and palm myrtles intervene,  
And sombre ferns gigantic choke the way;  
The air-fed Spanish moss hangs listless, green,  
From out-stretched boughs of cypress looming  
grey,  
Thick canopies of leaves spread overhead,  
The stagnant pool extends its oozy bed.

The piping of some wandering water-bird  
Alone disturbs the ghostly solitude,  
Save where Mocassin's snake is faintly heard  
Quick rustling in the spongy underwood,  
The alligator, motionless and blurred,  
Lies in the reeds along the slimy flood,  
Where the Palmetto opes its graceful fan,  
And twilight deepens from the daylight wan.

## THE CRIMSON FLOW.

“Religion bred the first fratricide, and since then it has borne on its forehead the sign of blood.”—HEINE.

THE proud Arch Fiend in legendary time  
The gauge of battle 'gainst Jehovah  
hurled!

Satan, in Cain rebellious, fired the crime  
That led religious conflict in the world.

Lo! the First Christian, Founder of the  
Creed,  
The direst anguish “claimed Him for its  
own”;

He died upon the Tree, thus doomed to  
bleed:

So blood was the oblation—blood alone!

The gladiator, bloodstained, sinking, bows,  
For sport of Rome in early Christian age;  
And the Crusaders made to Heaven their  
vows

To shed the Moslem blood in holy rage.

The Inquisition, Spain's repellent shame,  
 Servetus' martyrdom "must give us  
 pause";  
 Where'er we trace—Tribunal—Torture—  
 Flame,  
 Ever 'tis blood, spilt in Religion's cause.

France—Ah! thy massacre of Huguenots!  
 England, dost thou still hold thy Land a  
 saint?  
 Ireland, forgiv'st thou Cromwell? Passion  
 glows  
 O'er such abhorrent annals—blood the  
 taint.

By jangling creeds still are our senses  
 stunned;  
 Malignity hath stayed the grossest art;  
 But, leper-like, the heretic is shunned,  
 So bigotry yet plays its craven part.

## TRUTH.

I N Courts of Law—the last resort of Truth—  
As in the past at Pilate's judgment seat,  
The test is still uncertain, for, in sooth,  
Men on the Book affirm full oft to cheat.

In deserts dry, bright water distant  
glimmers—  
Mirage illusive to the caravan,  
A mystic lake, whose sparkling surface  
shimmers;  
Refraction's phasma, ne'er approached by  
man.

So juggles love, as truth, as we embrace it  
When courtship leadeth to the altar rails;  
Fate irrepressible may yet displace it.  
For Truth, put Doubt, as nothing else  
avails!

NIGHT AT CORRINGA, SOUTHERN  
INDIA.

THE voices of the jungle faintly rise,  
The hot meridian by sea-winds is  
fanned;  
Night, as a bird from palm-tops, downward  
flies,  
And covers with its breast this Eastern  
land.

The hills and hollows soften to the skies—  
A solemn stillness broods on either hand—  
Night, as a ghost from grave-clothes, upward  
flies,  
And covers with its wings this Eastern  
land.

The sea takes to itself a violet hue,  
The moonbeams chase each other o'er the  
sand;  
Night, over Mosque and Temple, once anew  
Shrouds with unuttered thought this Eastern  
land.

“THE VOICE CRYING IN THE  
WILDERNESS.”

—ST. MATTHEW, c. 3, v. 3.

ON the hills, in the valleys quiescent,  
Where the moth on its blue velvet  
wings  
Flutters over the gorse evanescent,  
Where the blackbird melodiously sings  
On the downs, by the desolate heath,  
Where the mist hangs a vaporous wreath,  
and clings,  
There, wandered a Saint in dejection,  
Like to Job, so forsaken by all;  
Abstracted, absorbed in reflection,  
By thoughts that oppress and appal;  
He was weird; flowing robes his apparel;  
A Hindoo, one might of long travel,  
recall.  
He mused, and he sighed, then he muttered:  
“To whom, or to what shall I pray?  
Hath God from His paradise utered  
One word to His creatures of clay?  
In what bright particular star  
Is Brahma—the Triune—so far.



away?

“ Our Vedas, who gave them? Long ages  
Have passed since these Scriptures were  
traced;

And dead are the Pundits and Sages

Who framed them—their names are erased.  
Great Vishnu, or Siva, or Kali,  
To plead to, is impotent folly,  
and waste ! ”

## THE SPHYNX.

I F Beauty lures, Impassiveness repels—  
Mute falls thy charm, thou lifeless figure  
there;

A power in this deserted temple dwells  
And thou art hallowed in thy hushed  
despair.

Thy steely eyes the secret will not solve,  
The riddle of the life of mortal man;  
Sages may ask and ages may revolve,  
Futile the Impotent himself to scan.

The shadows gather from the Pyramids,  
The sunset lingers on the sandy track,  
A sense of awe the vagrant pilgrim bids  
To gaze—and fascinated to look back.

“THE WORLD KNOWS NOTHING OF  
ITS GREATEST MEN.”

“FULL many a flower,” so sang the poet  
Gray,  
“Is born to blush unseen,” obscure from day;  
Full many a genius, cast in mortal mould,  
Among the deathless names is ne’er unrolled.

Whether misled by some malefic star,  
Or stopt by Poverty’s impervious bar;  
Like glow-worms’ lamps in a rain-darkened  
glen,  
Pale shines the lustre of the greatest men.

In every clime, in every earthly plot,  
Titans and Gods lie buried and forgot—  
Their mighty voices sounded once—but  
then—  
“The world knows nothing of its greatest  
men.”

## MYSELF.

WHO made me, and who will unmake me  
soon?

A hundred years ago I was not I—  
Why do I thus possess life's fitful boon—  
A jester's laugh—the burden of a sigh?

Astonished at myself I seek the cause—  
The Book of Knowledge unto me is sealed—  
I am fast bound in adamantine laws,  
But the lawgiver's face is unrevealed.

Not to the God of Moses can I pray—  
Yet to some God I'm devotee and slave—  
O Thou Unknown One, shed on me one ray,  
And leave me not for ever in the grave!

## LEO XIII.

ST. PETER:—"If the glimpses of the  
moon

Thou couldst revisit," on this earthly stage;  
Thronging to learn, how would we importune  
For revelation of thy perished age.

It may not be! so, doubt and chilling fear  
Pervade some bosoms, in these latter days.  
Now, Stalking-Death, this great High Priest  
draws near,  
And we lament the parting of his ways.

Pallid, world-dominating, rapt, recluse,  
Bard, Theologian, Prelate, Sainted-King;  
Like withered leaf, that Heaven forbears to  
loose,  
Upon the vital stem yet lingering.

Oil in the socket of thy lamp lies low:  
"Wrestling with Death!" trembles thy  
fragile frame;  
Saint Peter's light doth flicker to and fro,—  
Inexorable Death puts out the flame!

## THE RECLUSE IN HIS DREAMS.

"It is better to be sitting than standing, it is better to be lying down than sitting; it is better to be dead than living."  
—ARABIAN PROVERBS.

HE escaped from the commonplace present  
And built him a castle of air;  
To emotions abstracted and pleasant  
He emerged from the sloughs of despair,  
But between lay a hill and a hollow  
So wide, that the world could not follow  
Him there.

His eyes had a far-away glamour;  
He could not be subject to forms;  
All truth did his being enamour;  
He clasped her in tears to his arms;  
Distraught on the hill, in the valley,  
No spirit approached him to parry  
Alarms.

Through terror and tempest and travail  
He has passed to a passionless zone,  
The life he has failed to unravel  
Is gentle at last in his own—  
Unwise he pursued with persistence  
The problem of every existence  
Unknown.

“WITH THE DEAD THERE IS NO  
RIVALRY.”

—MACAULAY.

THE feuds, the struggle, and the jealousy  
Imbrue mankind full surely—look  
around.

But “with the dead there is no rivalry,”  
In catacomb, or vault, or underground.

In desolation, sunk in lethargy,  
Are laid the dead, the straws of what they  
were.

Among the dead there is no rivalry;  
On blank unconsciousness no passions glare.

Ye place-seekers! Ye emulative tribe!  
Reach, if ye can, life's ladder's topmost  
rung;

Oft doomed to failure, mark of jest and gibe:  
So have the dead to lath and plaster clung.

Among the dead there is no rivalry:  
With these is vapid nothingness alone.  
Speak to a tomb, it will not make reply—  
Impotent are the sepulchre and stone.

There is no lasting peace in a churchyard :  
    There howling tempests roll their clamours  
        by,  
There midnight darkness settles on the sward,  
    There folded are the wings of melancholy.

The creaking curtain on life's drama falls,  
    Sang Avon's minstrel, "all the world's a  
        stage."  
Immured at length within impassive walls  
    Are the dead actors. God console the sage.



## A TOMB IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

BEHOLD! These tombs with their profound  
appeal!

A wond'rous glamour is upon them shed;  
To life, not death, let holy reverence kneel:  
Love, Valour, Beauty, Pity, are not dead.

From forth this tomb, where death hath set  
his seal,

A maiden's spirit scatters ardent rays;  
Here fond affection can for others feel;  
Even in death most pleasant are her ways.

To this low vault, where darkness doth forbid  
The light of day, came radiance from the  
spheres—

And underneath this heavy leaden lid  
Are folded smiles—Why are we asked for  
tears?

## LIFE AND DEATH.

SAY, what is life? the spirit, not the form :  
Is it what flashes in the thunder-storm?  
This inner consciousness that comes and goes  
Like meteor swift, from dark to dark that  
glows.

And what is death? Is't some insidious calm  
That spreads on earth its universal balm?  
Whate'er it be we really can't decline it,  
Though there are terms may pithily define it.

Death is a robber—bailiff—and no less,  
That rifles and puts in a dire “distress.”—  
Man straining to foil death is sure an error,  
For to live for ever would be a terror!

Not to have lived at all—a single minute—  
Is non-existence—there is nothing in it.  
Ye wise and good, resolve life's riddle strange,  
And show to lesser minds a wider range.

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

SYSTEMS on systems in the starry maze,  
Lost to conception and above our gaze,  
What is this planet in the floods of light?  
Watchman, what of the Night?

Systems on systems in unending space,  
Amazing and confounding thought to trace,  
Forming, existing, passing from their might;  
Watchman, what of the Night?

Systems on systems—stars of magnitude—  
Suns upon suns—avails it aught to brood,  
Ephemeral man, in momentary sight?  
Watchman, what of the Night?

## THE LAST MOMENTS OF MIRABEAU.

THE sun pours down an avalanche of light,  
The spring is ushered in in loveliest  
guise,

So fair a morning to sinister night;—  
Behold, a shadow creeps across the skies.

The glamour of the soul of Mirabeau—  
Titanic spirit—fadeth at the last;  
His embers rally to a final glow,  
Return to ashes now his life is passed.

The revolution of a bygone France  
Floods down the years the name of  
Mirabeau;  
Tradition doth invest it with romance,  
And time preserves it through time's ebb  
and flow.

## THE WEEPING ASH.

THE spider of the fields his web hath spun ;  
The lark springs upwards in tumultuous  
rush :

(Like Icarus he leaps to meet the sun) ;  
This Ash-tree broods in melancholy hush.  
About these solemn boughs, in pensive shade,  
The world intrudes not nor its voices clash,  
But I who loiter in the lonely glade  
Seek the fond solace of this soothing Ash.  
Thou Venus of the woods ! Down at thy feet  
I sink in reverence, for thy charms abash ;  
And every memory passionate and sweet  
Sheds its own tears beneath this weeping Ash.

## TO ISABEL IN INDIA.

“THOU are gone from my gaze”;  
All thy wit and thy ways,  
And thy laugh rings no more in the air;  
Thou hast sped to the land  
Of the coral-girt strand,  
Where the sun shines aloft in a glare.

Thou art nothing to me,  
So far over the sea,  
Then why should'st thou cause me distress?  
To have loved, to have lost,  
Is not love, but its ghost,  
So let me forget thy caress.

## A BUTTERFLY.

DOST remember  
 When didst clamber  
 Pupillary worm?  
 Thro' the grasses,  
 'Mid morasses,  
 To thy present form?

Shall we ever  
 In the ether  
 Recollect this earth  
 Of our early  
 Hurly-burly,  
 In another birth?

Wings that tremble  
 And resemble  
 Prisms passing by:  
 Shy, clandestine,  
 Amethystine,  
 Painted butterfly.

TO MISS DOROTHY POWYS.

ON HER LIKENESS TO THE POET SHELLEY.

WHAT is this Ariel face  
Of pure ethereal grace?  
In Memory's cave I trace  
A Poet's phantom mien;  
And Shelley is fulfilled,  
Restored and re-instilled,  
So occult Nature willed,  
In features feminine.

She came a transient gleam,  
An evanescent dream;  
Yet she to me did seem  
A spirit ray'd and star'd—  
As filmy as the cloud  
By Shelley's spells endowed,  
And so to her I bowed  
As if she were the bard.

And I can not forget,  
And it pursues me yet,  
That in her frame are set  
The opals faded long,  
That somewhere 'neath the skies  
On earth doth re-arise  
In new and sweet disguise  
Our Nightingale of song!



STEPHANUS TO THARA.

YON silvery moon that wanders o'er the  
sky—

At streak of dawn her glamour will have  
set.

Thara be mine to-night, not by-and-bye;  
Ere I forget.

The day hath sped. There are no voices nigh  
This secret trysting-place where we have  
met.

Let us ensure the moment,—thou and I,—  
Ere I forget.

I have loved others, and I know not why  
Others I should not love, and lose thee; yet  
Faithful, to-night for thee alone I sigh,  
Ere I forget.

## THARA TO STEPHANUS.

DOUBT of thyself, but do not doubt of me,  
I have not faltered since at first we met.  
I, who have clung, will ever cling to thee;  
I will remember—never will forget.

Yon argent moon that sets upon the sea,  
When she hath vanished I'll be faithful yet.  
Unto my heart thou hast the magic key—  
I will remember—never will forget.

Still shall I pine wherever *thou* may'st be;  
Plunged by thine absence into fond regret,  
My Stephanus, be this thy Thara's plea,  
She will remember—never will forget.

## ENTHUSIASM.

SHE clasps her hands, she lifts her beaming  
eyes,

The lamp of life she overbrims with light,  
Distilled from clouds that flit across the skies  
She falls, an essence, from her airy flight.

Most pure when pleadeth she some hopeless  
cause,

Most holy when she kneels to the unseen,  
She is a creature born of love not laws—  
Flushed is her cheek, impassioned is her  
mien.

In hope deceived and oft in wasted zeal

She sees the ashes of her rapt design,  
Nevertheless the passionless must feel  
She was devoted and she is divine.

## AT MY GODCHILD'S CHRISTENING.

NOT with firm faith and not with holy zeal  
By this stone font in this lone church I  
kneel;  
In struggling prayer subdued, I bend the  
knee,  
Invoking God to bless and cherish thee.

Plato, Confucius, Zoroaster, sought  
The way to Truth, by arduous stress of  
thought;—  
I, their poor follower, ask forgiveness if  
I cannot read this Church's hieroglyph.

Ah! child, thou heir of Time, thy parents'  
hope,  
Astrologer may cast thy horoscope,  
I may not—I can only humbly pray  
No broken lights like mine shall e'er distract  
thy way.

“A PLACE IN THY MEMORY, DEAREST,  
IS ALL THAT I CLAIM.”

—CARLETON.

LET him the new favoured and nearest  
Supplant me, nor reck of my name :  
A place in thy memory, dearest,  
Is all that I claim.

Tho' affection no longer thou bearest,  
There are embers resolving from flame :  
A place in thy memory, dearest,  
Is all that I claim.

The song that no longer thou hearest,  
How can it to me be the same ?  
A place in thy memory, dearest,  
Is all that I claim.

## THE MIND.

WHEN one who stands upon a mountain  
height,  
Takes all the circling landscape with his  
eyes,  
Those eyes have drawn from Mind their rapt  
delight,  
Those pastures wear the tinge of mental  
skies.

Worlds upon worlds with their majestic show  
Like bubbles, from the Mind that thinks  
them, pour :  
Passions, emotions, fancies, come and go,  
Across the threshold of the mental door.

Our world without is from our world within ;  
By the mind's working we have lost or won ;  
Like to the spider, so our web we spin ;  
As weaves the silkworm is our fabric spun.

THE MINIATURE OF A LITTLE CHILD.

(To Brian O'Neill.)

IN contemplation of this miniature,  
 Unto the mind admiring thoughts arise :  
 Locks falling on the brow, and looks so pure,  
 The charm of childhood's frank and winning  
 eyes.

But destiny hath perils—Ah ! begone  
 Sinister fears ! See nature's beauteous dye  
 Alone at present—roseate dawn upon  
 Thy widening day—meridian by-and-bye.

IN MEMORIAM. WALTER WILLIAMS.

HE who was gentle, gently passed away ;  
He who was thoughtful, merged his  
    musing mind  
In that far spirit throng, in dim array,  
Who were in life to pensiveness resigned.

Question not thou why death is here or there !  
Death flits, a muffled ghost, o'er all man-  
    kind—  
Enough ! he lived in meditative care—  
And now to Memory fond he is assigned.

With even-balanced scales he strove to stand  
    'Twixt the loud voice and whispering low  
    and true—  
He found in Nature the Magician's hand—  
Wondered and prayed—What more could  
    mortal do?



## THE THORN'S SOLILOQUY.

I N winding, lonely lane,  
Weed and wastrel was I born,  
Carried there by wind and rain,  
Seed—I grew a common Thorn.

Bloomed a wild Rose by my side,  
With her charms I fell in love,  
And I wished she were my bride  
In some leafy-shaded grove.

Ah ! she leant to me, and crept,  
When her leaves were falling fast ;  
For that pale wild Rose I wept—  
Dews—the tear-drops down me cast.

## EXILED FROM OFFHAM.

AS when we lose some fond familiar face,  
Gone from our gaze—our unavailing  
tears

Bedew the ground and vainly we retrace  
The faded lineaments that thought endears.

So do these downs and misty ridges claim,  
Woods, winding ways and every coign once  
ours,

A deep regret beyond all words to name,  
As we abandon Offham's leafy bowers.

But not alone do Offham's aspects seem  
To haunt the exile in his other clime,  
But all her story like a broken dream  
Returns upon him from the glass of time.

## VIA MEDIA.

ENTANGLED threads of good and ill,  
    Enweave life's weft and woof;  
We drink the cup the gods distil,  
    In their own sphere, aloof.

Imagination, oft at fault,  
    Colours each changing mood;  
We sink too low—too high we vault,  
    Our state misunderstood.

Then let us take the equal mean,  
    In trial hopeful ever;  
Nor e'er exult, but pass between  
    The thorny-hedge and river.

## FIRST LOVE.

UPON the rim of the new-risen sun  
I saw a shining image through the  
haze;  
I said, "Who art thou, O enchanting one,  
Nursed in the cradle of the orient rays?"

Then it replied to me, "I am First Love;  
With mine emotion I enkindle youth—  
Invisible I fall from Heaven above—  
Life lacking love would be forlorn in truth."

It disappeared; but afterwards I knew  
That First Love gone haunts recollection  
yet;  
The bosom unconsoled will ever rue  
The first fond object on its altar set.

## LAST LOVE.

AS thus subsiding on life's fatal stream,  
Its outflow to the ocean brought to view,  
Love and all passion passes like a dream,  
My last allegiance is to Nature due.

Her hills eternal hushed in soft repose,  
Clothed in the lustre of the setting orb,  
Her primal forests whence our race arose,  
Claim my last longing and my sense absorb.

In the vast Whole, myself a drop of dew  
Melts in the dusk, but glitters in the mist,  
Stars take their stations in the darkly blue—  
Somewhere in Heaven I seek a lover's tryst.

## TO THE READER.

FORTUNE hath smiled, who never smiled  
before;

I must not taunt her—she's a woman still;  
But these my verses when I live no more,  
They will.

There are some jealous of another's powers,  
And some are pleased if some one else  
succeeds,

One such did come and took away my flowers  
Or weeds.

He bound them up in leaves as here you see;  
Strewed them abroad, which I could never  
do;

So if they're common, please blame him, not  
me—

Adieu.

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